The Cleveland Museum of Art

Case Western Reserve University and Cleveland Museum of Art Announce Innovative Collaboration

News Release
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Tuesday, September 10, 2013
$15 million gift deepens and expands existing partnerships through support of joint doctoral program, scholarship, and the museum's Ingalls Library

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CLEVELAND (September 10, 2013) – Case Western Reserve University and the Cleveland Museum of Art are launching a landmark initiative that capitalizes on their longtime collaborations as well as their strengths in scholarship, curation, conservation and education.

The new venture emerged from the vision and dedication of Cleveland Museum of Art trustee Nancy Keithley and Case Western Reserve trustee Joseph Keithley. The couple has committed $15 million through the Nancy and Joseph Keithley Fund at The Cleveland Foundation to realize the ideal of a joint effort that advances both institutions and prepares future curators, scholars, museum directors and academic leaders. In recognition of Nancy and Joseph's philanthropic leadership, the dynamic and forward-thinking program will be named The Nancy and Joseph Keithley Institute for Art History.

"We feel strongly about the world-class quality of institutions in Cleveland," Nancy and Joseph Keithley said. "We also believe collaboration increases exponentially their benefit and influence within our community, and well beyond it. We are thrilled to help catapult this partnership to a new level of global impact."

A centerpiece of the Keithley Institute is support for the reimagined joint doctoral program that the museum and university developed together over the past few years. A recipient of a $500,000 grant from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation last year, the updated program emphasizes an "object-oriented" approach – that is one that integrates theory and methodology with intensive, in-person study of actual pieces of art. In addition to seeing objects firsthand, students also will participate in museum internships that provide real-world experience in curation and other aspects of museum operation. In an era when digital and virtual lessons become increasingly ubiquitous, the value of an object focus becomes all the more apparent.

“We are honored that Nancy and Joseph Keithley chose to help us realize our shared dreams of a dynamic, world-class institute,” said David Franklin, the Sarah S. and Alexander M. Cutler Director of the Cleveland Museum of Art. “Their gift is not only a gift of collaboration, but also the opportunity to realize incomparable opportunities for students, faculty, museum staff and the public. We look forward to working closely with Case Western Reserve to make this an innovative program that attracts the best and brightest faculty and students from this country and around the world.”

The Keithleys commitment will provide graduate students stipends and travel fellowships, as well as compensation for curriculum development, teaching and collection seminars. Undergraduates also will be eligible for funding for summer internships. In addition, the commitment will support acquisitions and other essential needs of the museum’s extraordinary Ingalls Library and Museum Archives, the third-largest art research library in the United States.

“We are humbled, excited and inspired by this historic commitment from Nancy and Joseph Keithley,” Case Western Reserve President Barbara R. Snyder said. “Their generosity and commitment to collaboration will advance our partnership with the Cleveland Museum of Art in ways that will benefit scholars, museums and the field of art history itself for generations to come.”

The joint doctoral program between Case Western Reserve and Cleveland Museum of Art dates back to 1967. From the start the program has drawn upon museum’s world class collections and training in connoisseurship, acquisitions research and exhibition development. In addition to the revitalized doctoral program, the endowment will support public and academic programming as well as joint publications that highlight the institute’s progress and impact. All of the efforts will fall under the strategic leadership of an institute director, also funded by the Keithleys’ gift.

“Each work of art is an idiosyncratic, fascinating object in its own right,” said Catherine Scallen, chair of the university’s department of art history and art and one of the co-authors of the new program. “Each one of them has its own life history – that’s why it’s very important to learn about the specific object.”

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About Case Western Reserve University

Case Western Reserve University is one of the country's leading private research institutions. Located in Cleveland, we offer a unique combination of forward-thinking educational opportunities in an inspiring cultural setting. Our leading-edge faculty engage in teaching and research in a collaborative, hands-on environment. Our nationally recognized programs include arts and sciences, dental medicine, engineering, law, management, medicine, nursing and social work. About 4,200 undergraduate and 5,600 graduate students comprise our student body. Visit case.edu to see how Case Western Reserve thinks beyond the possible.

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About the Cleveland Museum of Art

The Cleveland Museum of Art is renowned for the quality and breadth of its collection, which includes more than 63,000 artworks and spans 6,000 years of achievement in the arts. The museum is a significant international forum for exhibitions, scholarship and performing arts and is a leader in digital innovations. One of the top comprehensive art museums in the nation, recognized for its award-winning Open Access program and free of charge to all, the Cleveland Museum of Art is located in the University Circle neighborhood.

The museum is supported in part by residents of Cuyahoga County through a public grant from Cuyahoga Arts & Culture and made possible in part by the Ohio Arts Council (OAC), which receives support from the State of Ohio and the National Endowment for the Arts. The OAC is a state agency that funds and supports quality arts experiences to strengthen Ohio communities culturally, educationally and economically. For more information about the museum and its holdings, programs and events, call 888-CMA-0033 or visit cma.org [1].

Press Announcements [2]

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